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Minutes of the First Meeting of the Photo Working Panel  
13-14 November 1963

1. The first meeting of the Photo Working Panel was held at NPIC on 13-14 November 1963. The following personnel were present:

Members

Name Affiliation

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Lt Col LeRoy A. Williams Westover AFB

Others

[Redacted]

Dr. Eugene Fubini (part time) Department of Defense

[Redacted]

Dr. Brockway McMillan NRO  
(part time)

[Redacted]

Dr. A. D. Wheelon (part time) CIA

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2. The meeting was called to order by the Chairman at 0915 on 13 November. [ ] was introduced as Technical Director of the Panel. [ ] gave a security briefing. The members read the security agreements for various special clearances and signed the required statements.

3. Mr. John McCone, DCI, welcomed the group. Mr. McCone stressed the importance of intelligence in the formulation of national policy, and cited the increasing role of photographic intelligence as exemplified by the Cuban missile crisis.

4. Dr. Brockway McMillan, Director of NRO, expressed NRO interest in the Panel and reaffirmed NRO support.

5. Dr. A. D. Wheelon, CIA, traced the history of photographic intelligence and pointed out certain gaps in our present capabilities. Due to the pressure of operations, improvements in existing systems have been made on a pragmatic basis. He cited the main purpose of this group -- to investigate more fully the effects of certain variables on system performance in an attempt to improve reliability. Dr. Wheelon pointed out that the establishment of the Panel was a break with the normal intelligence practice of compartmentation. He stated that the potential improvements which might result from the Panel's work outweighed this compartmentation.

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6. [ ] CIA, summarized a preliminary analysis of the C system. He noted that the spread in performance of this system was wider than expected on the basis of known factors. It was the consensus of the Panel members that this study should be examined in more detail later.

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7. [ ] CIA, summarized the general operating parameters of the I and C systems, and cited certain improvements planned for future models.

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8. [ ] NRO, briefed the members on the characteristics of the L, [ ] systems. [ ] traced the cycle of system operation from launch to product development.

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9. Mr. Arthur Lundahl, Director of NPIC, presented a brief summary of the increasing importance and scope of photographic intelligence, culminating in the establishment of NPIC in 1961. Mr. Lundahl traced the path of the film after development. He also discussed the various categories of product reports emanating from NPIC. He predicted that future direction of NPIC efforts would involve [redacted]

[redacted] of objects on the ground.

10. [redacted] NPIC, discussed a computerized system which will shortly become available to the photo interpreters. Mr. [redacted] NPIC, cited various problems encountered in the past. These included light leaks, corona discharge from static, etc.

11. [redacted] NPIC, presented an evaluation of Mission [redacted]. An apparent problem is the determination of a quantitative measure of the success of the mission. Some discussion ensued regarding this problem. The criteria for selection of the 77 test frames from Mission [redacted] were discussed. It was the consensus of the Panel that this evaluation should be examined in more detail later.

12. [redacted] pointed out that early missions were flown at higher altitudes and that this factor should be kept in mind in comparing different missions.

13. Lt Colonel LeRoy A. Williams, Westover, discussed Westover's operations and suggested that the group might profit by a visit to his facility. The Panel members agreed with this suggestion. Lt Colonel Williams also discussed the Controlled Range Network, which might well be useful for various controlled experiments. This network is available for Panel use.

14. The transfer functions of optical systems were discussed by [redacted]. It was pointed out that real targets of interest are often of relatively low contrast, making the resultant resolution lower than theoretical.

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25X1 15. [ ] solicited comments and suggestions for future direction of the effort. He suggested that the appropriate company representatives review in detail the criteria used for design of the particular sub-system for which they were responsible. To this end, "seminars in depth" were tentatively scheduled for the following meeting (see Agenda of Second Meeting). Initial analysis will involve the C system. [ ] also solicited proposals for controlled experiments which the Panel members deemed desirable. It was noted that a certain overlapping of the seminars was desirable. The question was raised concerning the possibility of bringing in other representatives of the participating companies for selected briefings. This was considered desirable and will be carried out as required.

25X1 16. It was the consensus of the group that the interface between the photo-interpreters and the photographs was an important area and should be examined. [ ] a cleared psychologist, will be scheduled to make a presentation to the group regarding the problem.

17. Visits to Westover and ITEK Corporation were tentatively set for the first week of December. After the camera systems are observed during preparation at ITEK, the group may visit Lockheed to study the final assembly of the systems. This latter visit is tentatively planned for the second week in December.

18. The group toured the NPIC facilities on 13 November.

19. The meeting was adjourned by the Chairman at 1700 on 14 November 1963.

I certify that the foregoing minutes are correct.

[ ]  
Chairman

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